

Health insurance exchanges are top priority on U.S. agenda

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Mollyann Brodie, Ph.D., from The Henry J. [Kaiser Family Foundation](#) in Menlo Park, Calif., and colleagues queried 1,347 adults about their priorities for, and views on, a wide range of health and health policy issues, including the role of Medicare in the deficit reduction debate and implementation of the [Affordable Care Act](#).

The researchers found that 55 percent of respondents (including a

majority of Democrats and Republicans) selected creating a [health insurance](#) exchange or marketplace as their top priority for their state's governor and legislature. Fifty-two percent of respondents believed that their state should adopt Medicaid expansion, with 75 percent of Democrats but only 34 percent of Republicans in agreement. Areas where respondents would be unwilling to see any spending cuts included public education (61 percent), Medicare (58 percent), Social Security (58 percent), and Medicaid (46 percent). The diseases and health conditions that the respondents felt posed the greatest threat to the American public were cancer (56 percent) and heart disease (35 percent), unchanged since 2007, and diabetes (30 percent) and obesity (26 percent), which increased from 14 and 6 percent, respectively, in 2007.

"These poll results provide more evidence that our nation is on the right track with expanding availability of affordable [health coverage](#), and focusing more on preventing illness before it results in costly treatment," David Colby, Ph.D., vice president of public policy at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, said in a statement.

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